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Viewing cable 09BOGOTA3483, COLOMBIAN DEFENSE MINISTRY SOURS ON ISRAELI DEFENSE FIRM

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Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#09BOGOTA3483**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09BOGOTA3483	2009-12-01 20:59	2011-08-30 01:44	SECRET//NOFORN	Embassy Bogota

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2011/05/09/113919/wikileaks-us-saw-israeli-firms.html>

VZCZCXYZ0000
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBO #3483/01 3352100
ZNY SSSSS ZZH
O R 012059Z DEC 09
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1292
INFO RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC
RHMFIISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL
RHMFIISS/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHINGTON DC
RHMFIISS/FBI WASHINGTON DC
RHMFIISS/Joint STAFF WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 0272
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
RUEHME/AMEMBASSY MEXICO 0805
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA
RUEHQQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV 0003
RUEHZP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA

S E C R E T BOGOTA 003483

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SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2019/12/01

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SUBJECT: COLOMBIAN DEFENSE MINISTRY SOURS ON ISRAELI DEFENSE FIRM

REF: A) BOGOTA 715; B) PANAMA 831

CLASSIFIED BY: William R. Brownfield, Ambassador; REASON: 1.4(A),
(B), (D)

SUMMARY

¶1. (S/NF) General Oscar Naranjo, Director of the Colombian National Police (CNP), told the Ambassador on November 24 that Defense Minister Gabriel Silva was souring on the Defense Ministry's relationship with Israel. Naranjo said that the CNP's relationship with retired Israeli Major General Yisrael Ziv and his firm Global CST had been a "disaster." Naranjo said he understood Ziv was trying to make inroads in Panama and Peru -- and that he had shared his concerns with authorities in Panama and would do the same with Peru if asked. He noted that Silva overruled Colombian Armed Forces Commander General Freddy Padilla's decision to purchase Israeli UAVs. Government of Colombia (GOC) officials described their experience with Global CST under the "Strategic Leap" process as mixed. End Summary.

MOD SOURS ON GLOBAL CST

¶2. (S/NF) CNP Director Naranjo told the Ambassador on November 24 that Defense Minister Silva was souring on the Defense Ministry's relationship with Israel. Naranjo said that the CNP's relationship with retired Israeli Major General Yisrael Ziv and his firm Global Comprehensive Security Transformation (Global CST) had been a "disaster." Naranjo said he had provided this negative feedback to Panamanian authorities upon their request. He indicated that Ziv was now also trying to sell his services to Peru. If Naranjo is asked by Peruvian authorities, he will share the same warning with them.

GOC DECLINES UAV PURCHASES

¶3. (S/NF) Naranjo told the Ambassador that in a sign of this growing dissatisfaction, Minister Silva had recently overruled Armed Forces Commander Padilla's decision to purchase Israeli unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). In late July 2009, Padilla had commissioned a delegation of Colombian military officers to travel to Israel to research possible acquisition of an Israeli-manufactured Hermes-450 UAV system. (Comment: This represents another sign of what is reported to be a distrustful and distant relationship between Minister Silva and General Padilla. End Comment.)

¶4. (S) GOC officials have expressed security concerns about Global CST in the past, and found it difficult to work with a private firm on national security matters as they were prevented from sharing USG intelligence with them. In February 2008, CNP sources reported

that a Global CST interpreter, Argentine-born Israeli national Shai Killman, had made copies of classified Colombian Defense Ministry documents in an unsuccessful attempt to sell them to the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) through contacts in Ecuador and Argentina. The documents allegedly contained high value target (HVT) database information. Ziv denied this attempt and sent Killman back to Israel.

ROLE IN STRATEGIC LEAP

¶ 15. (S) Colombia's defense cooperation with Israel cooled during the 1980s and 1990s, when some Israeli mercenaries reportedly helped train paramilitary forces in Colombia. Over the last two years, Embassy officers visiting the MOD and Colombian military have observed an increased presence of Israeli advisors. Beginning in December 2006, Colombia's Ministry of Defense engaged Global CST to help the GOC conduct a strategic assessment of the internal conflict (see ref A). General Ziv was a personal acquaintance of then-Minister of Defense Juan Manuel Santos.

¶ 16. (S/NF) The Global CST assessment focused on defeating the FARC and other internal terrorist and criminal organizations by 2010, but also included an evaluation of external threats including Venezuela and Ecuador. The MOD spearheaded the exercise -- originally named the "Strategic Leap" -- which was approved by President Uribe in February 2009. The Strategic Leap was subsequently rebranded as the National Consolidation Plan (PNC). Colombian officials have described their experiences with Global CST under the Strategic Leap planning process as mixed. Former Colombian Vice Minister of Defense Juan Carlos Pinzon told us that many of Global CST's programs and recommendations -- which carried a heavy consulting fee -- were already being implemented by the USG.

COMMENT

¶ 17. (S) Over a three year period, Ziv worked his way into the confidence of former Defense Minister Santos by promising a cheaper version of USG assistance without our strings attached. We and the GOC learned that Global CST had no Latin American experience and that its proposals seem designed more to support Israeli equipment and services sales than to meet in-country needs. Global CST was not transparent with us, and tried to insert itself into our classified discussions with the GOC. Given the GOC's experience with Global CST, it is no surprise that the Defense Ministry is pulling back from them and warning neighbors that their deals are not as good as advertised. End Comment.

BROWNFIELD